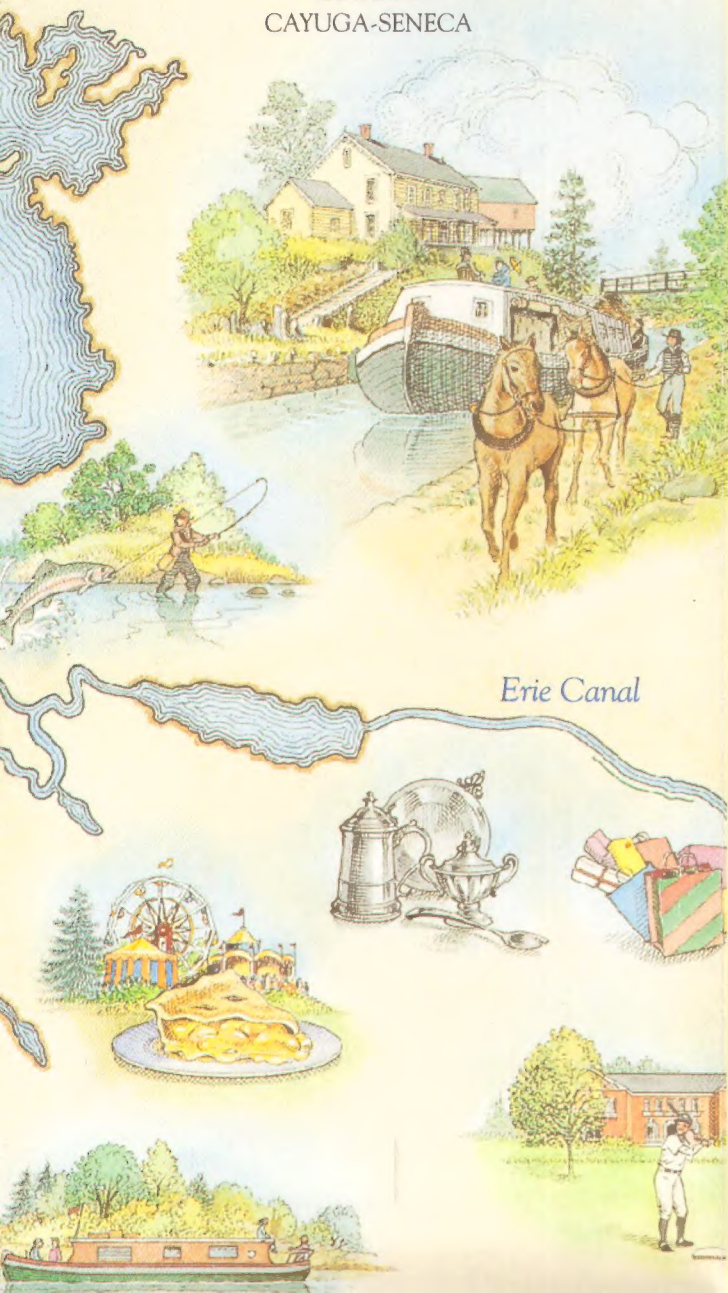


Unlock the Legend of

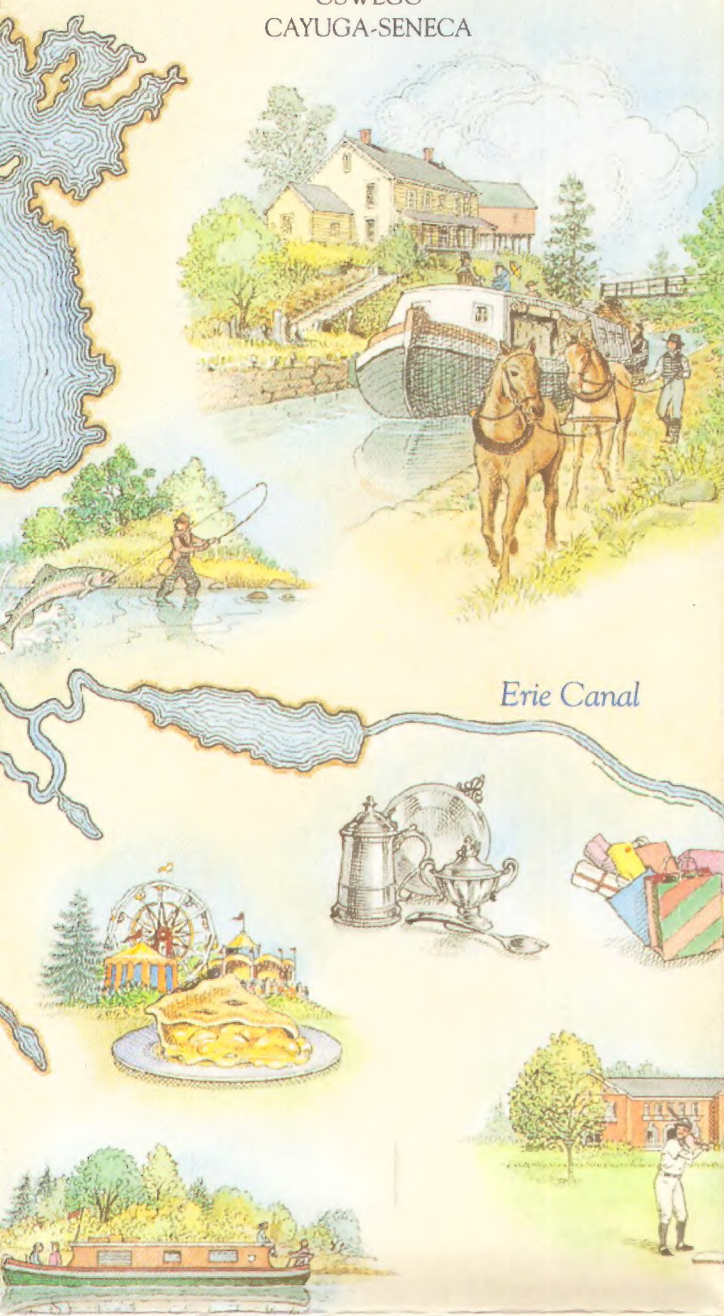
The New York State Canal System

ERIE
CHAMPLAIN
OSWEGO
CAYUGA-SENECA



Unlock the Legend of The New York State Canal System

ERIE
CHAMPLAIN
OSWEGO
CAYUGA-SENECA



Unlock the Legend

Come explore some of the oldest water routes in North America and follow in the wake of history.

The legend of the grand Erie Canal flows as strongly today as it did when it was opened in 1825. Four waterways — the Erie, the Champlain, the Oswego and the Cayuga-Seneca — travel through New York's heartland, gliding past lush farmland, famous battlefields, scenic port towns and thriving wildlife preserves.



The 524-mile New York State Canal System connects with hundreds of miles of lakes and rivers across the Empire State, linking the Great Lakes with the majestic Hudson River and with five waterways in Canada.

Along this historic corridor, visitors of all ages can enjoy more than 2,500 recreational facilities and attractions. Pleasure boaters, motorists, hikers and bicyclists alike will delight in unlocking the legend of New York's canals.



Clinton's Folly

When Governor DeWitt Clinton first proposed a canal from the Hudson River to the Great Lakes, detractors dismissed the project as "Clinton's Folly." The Erie Canal took seven years to build and was the engineering marvel of its day — yet it was constructed without the aid of a single professional engineer. It cut through 363 miles of wilderness and featured 18 aqueducts and 83 locks, with a rise of 568 feet from the Hudson River to Lake Erie.

Finished in 1825, it spurred the first great westward migration of American settlers, opened the only trade route west of the Appalachians and helped make New York the pre-eminent commercial city in the U.S. The Erie Canal was enlarged three times to accommodate heavy traffic, most recently between 1905 and 1918, when the present day Canal System was configured.

Today, the canals use or run parallel to the original waterways. And although the focus has shifted from commerce to pleasure, much of the equipment that allows thousands of recreational boaters to "lock through" the system's 57 locks every year dates back to 1918 and is meticulously maintained, often by second and third generation locktenders.

Where It Is, What to Do

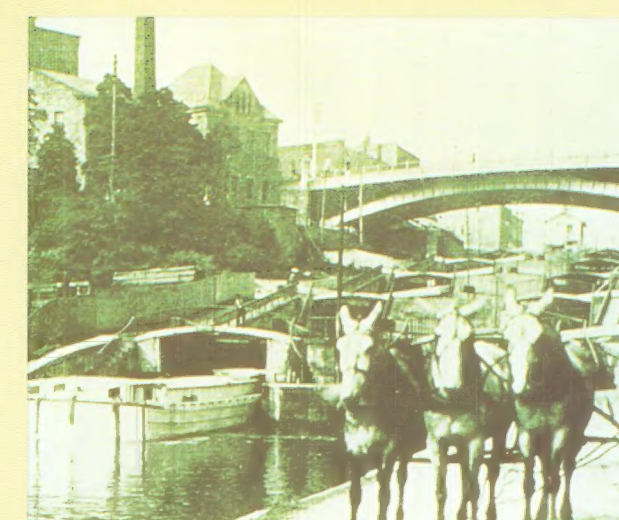
The world has changed since 1825, but along the canals the pace today is just as leisurely, the hospitality just as neighborly for contemporary travelers, as apt to come by car, bicycle, on foot or by boat, as in the days of mule-drawn packet boats and "hoggee" mule drivers.



Nearly every major city in New York can be found along the trade route established by the Erie Canal: it links Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica and Albany with New York City. So canal life beckons from the doorstep of every New York metropolitan center.

And the Canal System threads through five of the state's I♥NY vacation regions, each with a host of unique attractions — Capital-Saratoga, Thousand Islands-Seaway, Central Leatherstocking, Finger Lakes and Niagara Frontier. Canal vacation options abound.

Scores of parks, picnic areas, restaurants, inns, museums and historic sites are strung like small jewels along the canals' banks with even more to explore inland.



Low Bridge — Everybody Down!

To truly appreciate New York's Canals, you can't be a land-lubber. From May through November, it's on a boat that the canals truly come alive.

Use your own boat or rent a fully equipped canal boat, and chart your own course. Marinas provide a full range of services for transient boaters. You can tie up and explore quiet, 19th-century canal towns, bicycle to nearby wineries for a tour, then dine aboard as the sun gently sets.

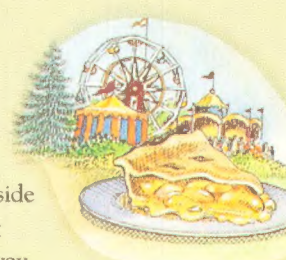
Tour boats also operate on all the Canal System's waterways. Cruise for a few hours or a few days, stopping at quaint inns and waterside restaurants along the way.

Vessels up to 300 feet long and 40 feet wide and pleasure craft can meander the length of the system — but bridges limit overhead clearance to 15½ or 20 feet.

See life from a different perspective. A solitary blue heron resting at the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge in Seneca Falls. Flocks of geese rising above the Champlain Canal. The Adirondacks boldly outlined against the sky at dusk. These, and thousands of other memories, are waiting for you. What you'll see and remember is up to you.

Step Ashore, Into History

A trip along the canals is a voyage into history. This rich heritage comes alive in many settings. Experience canal traditions at the Erie Canal Museum in Syracuse, the Canal Town Museum in Canastota, and Erie Canal Village in Rome — a complete, restored 1840s canal village. Ride in a mule-drawn packet boat near Medina or visit Lockport to see locks from the 1840s canal.



Or explore vestiges of abandoned canal sections, preserved stone locks and grassy towpaths once trodden by mule teams now restored for hikers and bicyclists in canalside parks. Old lock 52 is adjacent to the New York State Thruway.

Visit during summer and enjoy one of many Canal Festivals held in dozens of towns. At the Victorian Picnic and Craft Festival in DeWitt you can bring your own costume and pretend to step back in time. To view a sampling of the best of New York, visit The Great New York State Fair held every August in Syracuse.



Explore American history by visiting famous battlefields such as Fort Ticonderoga, Oriskany, Fort Stanwix and Fort Ontario. Witness the site

of the Battle of Saratoga, one of Britain's pivotal defeats during the American War of Independence, at Saratoga National Historical Park. In Little Falls, you can visit the Herkimer House, residence of General Nicholas Herkimer who led militia at Oriskany in the American Revolution.

Tour Seneca Falls, site of the first Women's Rights Convention in 1848 and today, home to the Women's Rights National Historical Park.

Or visit one of the state's Urban Cultural Parks, such as RiverSpark, at the start of the Erie and Champlain canals at the confluence of the Hudson and Mohawk rivers, where America's industrial revolution began.

Afloat and Ashore in the Great Outdoors

The regions traversed by the Canal System are a true sports lovers' paradise. There are nature preserves, hiking and biking trails, golf courses, tennis courts, campgrounds, parks and boats for hire. Let your spirits soar during a sunrise hot-air balloon ride.



Anglers can match their skills against the wiles of rainbow trout, bass, walleyes or northern pike. Just drop a line in the canal, or try your luck in one of the many streams and lakes in the region. A visit to Oswego will bring you to what was named the first freshwater port in the U.S. in 1799 and today known as the "Salmon Capital" of the Northeast.

The water also serves as a playground for boaters, paddlers, kayakers and water skiers.

Spectators, take heart too. During summer, there are Minor League baseball teams in Albany, Geneva and Buffalo, as well as world-class auto racing at Watkins Glen. And, of course, there's the fabled Saratoga Springs, home to the oldest continuous thoroughbred race meet in America.

Fall puts the spotlight on Buffalo with its professional football and hockey teams. In the Finger Lakes region, bird watchers will delight in spotting more than 300 species among the 6,400 protected acres of the Montezuma Wildlife Refuge.



Over the Rainbow — Just Right For Munchkins

In canal country family fun is always nearby.

It's where the Yellow Brick Road began — literally. Chittenango, just a few miles south of the canal, was the birthplace of L. Frank Baum, author of *The Wizard of Oz*. There's even a real yellow brick road in the center of town, and an annual Ozfest. The Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum exhibits artifacts from old Erie Canal days.

Children will love the beautifully restored 1916 carousel at the Allan Herschell Carousel Factory Museum in North Tonawanda. And Utica's Children's Museum offers hands-on exhibits for all ages.



Cooperstown, a short trip from the canal, is known as the "village of museums," the most famous being the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.

Niagara Falls isn't just for honeymooners. Families will love the falls' aquarium, not to mention the falls themselves — a breathtaking sight.

And all along the canal, the young (and young at heart) can recall folksong favorites from America's past, including "I Had a Mule, Her Name Was Sal, 15 Miles on the Erie Canal..."

The Fine Art of Relaxation

Whether you fancy quaint canalside inns, Victorian bed-and-breakfasts or modern accommodations, you'll find lodgings to suit your taste — and pocketbook — all along the canals.

Whether you're cruising in a rented canal boat or aboard your own craft, it's easy to go ashore to sample the local cuisine, farm-fresh produce, freshly-caught fish, even some original Buffalo chicken wings.

Oenophiles can savor a glass of chardonnay from one of the Finger Lakes region's 30 wineries. Beer lovers shouldn't miss Utica for a tour of its brewery and trolley ride to an 1888 tavern for a sample of their best brews. There's also root beer and ice cream for the kids.

And you're never far from the simple pleasures of an earlier era: a farmer's market, local crafts and antique shops, farms where you can pick your own strawberries and apples, or canalside parks perfect for picnics.

In short, everything you'll need to become a master in the art of relaxation.



Artful Cruising

For every taste in performing and fine arts, towns along the canals provide a stage of opportunity.



Open-air concerts at the Finger Lakes Performing Arts Center in Canandaigua are frequent. The village of Pittsford offers bi-weekly concerts in its canalside park. And the Saratoga Performing Arts Center is the summer home of the New York City Ballet and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Buffalo's Albright-Knox Art Gallery has an outstanding collection of contemporary art, including works by Frank Stella, Jackson Pollock and Jean Dubuffet.



For a glimpse of domestic life in late 19th and early 20th century America, the collections of Rochester's Strong Museum are unsurpassed. And the New York State Museum in Albany offers an extensive look at the state's history and peoples. The Canajoharie Library and Art Gallery holds an outstanding collection of American paintings.

Along the canal, informal festivals and crafts fairs, village galleries and antique shops are charming sources for both browsing and collecting.



Your Ship Has Come In

Where does your canal adventure begin? Boaters may enter the Canal System at a number of locations. For overland visitors, Buffalo and Albany offer airports and convenient Amtrak service. If you wish, begin in the middle, at Rochester or Syracuse, both easy to reach by air, rail or road. Or pick your own spot — the New York State Thruway parallels the heart of the Canal System corridor.

Of course the best place to begin your journey is on the phone. Call 1-800-4-CANAL-4 now for more information about things to see and do along the canals. Or write:

New York State Canal Corporation
P.O. Box 189
Albany, NY 12201-0189 or visit our website at:
<http://www.canals.state.ny.us>

To find out more about New York's many vacation attractions, call 1-800-CALLNYS, or write:

New York State Division of Tourism
P.O. Box 2603
Albany, NY 12220-0603



UNLOCK THE LEGEND...NEW YORK STATE CANAL SYSTEM

